

NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER



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Imagery analysis report

**Missile Handling Facility Under Construction
Aseb, Ethiopia (TSR)**

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**IAR-0030/79
SEPTEMBER 1979
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MISSILE HANDLING FACILITY UNDER CONSTRUCTION ASEB, ETHIOPIA (TSR)

1. (TSR) Aseb Missile Handling Facility [redacted] is currently under construction approximately 3 nautical miles north of Aseb along Ethiopia's Red Sea coast. This report discusses briefly the history of the construction of this facility, depicts the present status of that construction, and provides mensural data for the major buildings within the facility.

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2. (TSR) The facility is served by an interconnecting road network and consists of three separate areas—a missile handling and fueling area, a missile assembly and component storage area, and a housing and support area (Figure 1). The missile handling and fueling area contains six buildings: one drive-through, probable checkout building (item 1); two drive-through fueling buildings (items 2 and 3); and three support buildings (items 4, 5, and 6). The missile assembly and component storage area contains two drive-through missile assembly buildings (items 7 and 8), two drive-in component storage buildings (items 9 and 10), and a foundation (item 11) for a large drive-in building. Equipment handling cranes have been built above the entrances of both component storage buildings. A total of nine buildings, including a large vehicle/equipment storage building (item 12), are in the housing and support area.

3. (TSR) The entire installation is secured by a single perimeter security fence. Four guard towers are along this perimeter fence. Internal fences are presently under construction in the vicinity of the missile handling and fueling area and in the vicinity of the missile assembly and component storage area.

4. (TSR) Construction of this facility began between [redacted] [redacted] the installation was in a mid-to-late stage of construction with all of the major buildings externally complete. Between [redacted] construction proceeded at a relatively slow pace.

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5. (TSR) The fact that no missile handling equipment or missile canisters/crates have as yet been observed within the installation makes it difficult to determine the specific missile systems to be handled there. However, the layout of the facility, along with the types and sizes of the buildings observed there, indicates that this installation is designed to handle liquid propellant missiles, such as the Soviet SA-2 or the STYX cruise missile. At present, the Ethiopians have not deployed the SA-2 in the vicinity of Aseb, which is defended by the SA-3 missile system. The SA-3 is a solid propellant missile which would not require the fueling buildings that have been constructed at the Aseb Missile Handling Facility. In addition, a new installation, Aseb SA-3 Support Facility Alelao [redacted] has recently been established to support the two SA-3 sites in the area. The Ethiopians have stationed their Osa-II guided missile patrol boat at Aseb Port Facilities [redacted] Aseb Missile Handling Facility would be the logical installation to handle and service the STYX cruise missile, which is carried on the Osa-II.

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(S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted] Regional Analysis Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted]

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